

## **Findings and Decision - Assignment Application of Future Seafoods Inc. for AQ#1386**

### **1. Overview:**

On January 20, 2020, the Nova Scotia Department of Fisheries and Aquaculture (NSDFA) received an assignment application from Brian Howard for Aquaculture Licence and Lease #1386 (AQ#1386), as described below:

Table 1. Description of Aquaculture Licence and Lease #1386

<b>Type:</b> Marine	<b>Location:</b> Tracadie, West Arm, Antigonish
<b>Number:</b> AQ#1386	<b>Size:</b> 8.16 HA
<b>Assignor:</b> Brian Howard	<b>Cultivation Method:</b> Bottom cultivation without gear method
<b>Assignee:</b> Future Seafoods Inc.	<b>Species:</b> American oyster

### **2. History**

AQ#1386 was first issued to Brian Howard on February 17, 2015 for a ten year term (November 1, 2014 to November 1, 2024).

### **3. Procedure**

#### *3.1 Performance Review*

A performance review of the information submitted by the operator in support of their assignment application was completed. This review recommended that the site be assigned based on the technical and biological assessment. This performance review is required pursuant to Subsection 72(b) of the Aquaculture Licence and Lease Regulations, and was completed on November 24, 2020.

#### *3.2 Public Comment Period*

Notice of the application for the assignment of AQ#1386 for the 30-day public comment period was published on NSDFA's website (<http://novascotia.ca/fish/aquaculture/public-information/>) for the period of April 2, 2020 to May 1, 2020. Notice of the application was also published in the Royal Gazette Part I on April 2, April 9, April 16, April 23 and April 30, 2020.

#### *3.3 Submissions*

Zero submissions were received by NSDFA during the 30-day public comment period

### **4. Factors to be considered**

Review of the assignment application indicates that the proposed new operator intends to have appropriate levels of production and employment for AQ#1386. Information submitted in support of the assignment application indicates continued contributions to the local and provincial economy. Department staff will continue to monitor that production plans are implemented as submitted.

The Farm Operations section of the Farm Management Plan for AQ#1386 will require the operator to indicate how they will operate AQ#1386 in accordance with industry best practices with respect to maintaining the site in good order, the removal of decommissioned farm supplies and equipment, and the retrieval of gear or debris that has broken loose. Also, the Farm Management Plan for AQ#1386 must include wildlife interaction strategies to mitigate impacts on, and from, wildlife in the area of the site.

There are no recorded instances on file of AQ#1386 interfering with other users of the public waters surrounding the operation. Any complaints received by the Province of Nova Scotia specific to a particular aquaculture site, such as AQ#1386, are reviewed by Nova Scotia Environment, with appropriate follow-up and prescribed actions taken if necessary. The operator of AQ#1386 is also required to adhere to all necessary and relevant Provincial and Federal legislation and regulations that may be applicable to the marine cultivation of shellfish. The Licence and Lease documents will allow for continued access through the leased area for the purposes of recreational activities; however, others will not be permitted to carry out the harvest of species authorized on AQ#1386.

The review of the application noted that there are no expected impacts on fisheries activities as a result of the assignment of this lease and licence. There were no ecological concerns identified in the past performance of this site with respect to negative impacts on other fisheries. AQ#1386 is licensed to cultivate shellfish species, and as such there is no evidence that shellfish aquaculture will have impacts on the sustainability of wild salmon. The successful growth of American oysters in West Arm has been proven. The information reviewed during the review of the application did not indicate adverse impacts on the surrounding public waters.

AQ#1386 is located in the nearshore environment approximately 1km North-East of West Arm Tracadie. The nearest aquaculture site is another American oyster site, AQ#0524, situated in Tracadie Harbour and approximately 2km East of AQ#1386. There is no evidence to suggest that the existing aquaculture in this area has exceeded the carrying capacity of the harbour.

## **5. Decision**

Based on the considerations above, Brian Howard's right, title, and interest in and to Aquaculture Licence #1386 and Aquaculture Lease #1386 is hereby assigned to Future Seafoods Inc. The assignment shall have an effective date of November 26, 2020. The approval documents shall be prepared in accordance with the standard operating documents of NSDFA, and shall be made publically available subject to the provisions of the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act*.

In addition, the following condition shall apply.

## **6. Conditions**

The operator shall adhere to the following site marking requirements:

- a) Mark each corner and angle of the lease from May 1 to November 30, annually;

- b) Mark each corner and angle of the lease with a cautionary yellow buoy of a minimum 16 inches in diameter;
- c) Display "PRIV" in black, on opposite side of each buoy;
- d) At 1 corner buoy, display in black, the licence/lease number, licence holder's name and contact phone number.



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**Robert Ceschiutti**  
**Aquaculture Administrator**  
**Nova Scotia Department of Fisheries and Aquaculture**

November 26, 2020

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**Date**